



Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF VENTURA
Hall of Justice
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Michael D. Planet
*Executive Officer/Clerk
and Jury Commissioner*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 14, 2003

Contact: Robert Sherman
Deputy Executive Officer
(805) 654-2964

VENTURA SUPERIOR COURT RECEIVES TWO AWARDS

The Ventura Superior Court has received two awards from the State Information Officers Council (SiOC) for its Annual Report & Community Guide to Court Programs and Services and "Tip of the Day" radio program. The awards were presented at a special luncheon held in Sacramento on May 8, 2003 and recognize excellence in state government communications.

The Annual Report & Community Guide to Court Programs and Services is an eight-page publication providing general information to the community about the wide range of services and programs offered by the court. It features highlights of court activity during the past year, information on the many programs and services available, and little-known facts about the court.

The guide was distributed to over 110,000 households countywide in April 2002 as an insert in the newspaper and was designed to be interesting, informative, and easy to read. Additional copies were made available in the lobby of each court office, the jury assembly room, and at all public libraries.

The project was primarily funded by a \$30,000 grant obtained from the State of California's Administrative Office of the Courts. Interest in the guide led the court to pursue a Spanish-language version of the report. In June 2002, the court received a grant from the Foundation of the State Bar of California to produce 20,000 copies of the report in Spanish.

“Tip of the Day” is a program of Spanish-language public service radio announcements initiated in mid-2002 as a form of community outreach for the court’s no-cost Self-Help Legal Access Centers. Announcements lasting approximately five minutes are made live in Spanish Monday through Friday at 10:30 a.m. on KOXR radio station.

Topics are chosen from questions that have previously been raised by people seeking help at the center. Each tip is intended to provide general information to the community while also informing citizens of the wide range of services and programs offered by the court.

Previous programs have included information on landlord and eviction issues, restraining orders, child custody and support, contracts, driver’s licenses, automobile insurance, child safety seats, bad checks, and vehicle accidents. Other tips focus on the court’s programs and services, such as its Self- Help Centers, the Children’s Waiting Room, assistance with family related matters, the availability of interpreters, and its web site.

Since the program was implemented, the number of people seeking assistance at the Self-Help Legal Access Center in the predominately Spanish-speaking La Colonia neighborhood of Oxnard has more than doubled. Many have noted that they became aware of the center’s existence due to the “Tip of the Day” radio program.

SiOC is a not-for profit organization dedicated to providing support, education, information, networking, and other opportunities to the public information, communication, editorial and publication professionals in California state service.

#